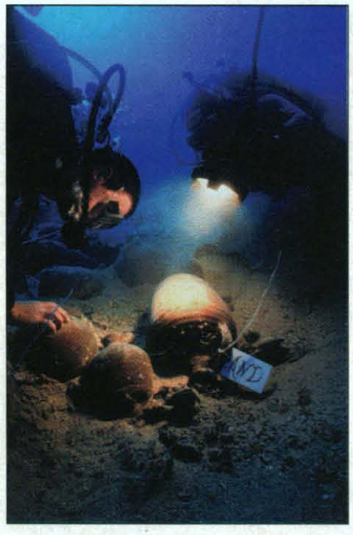
COOL IMAGES

Archaeology Down Under



Ever wonder what it's like to explore a sunken ship? You can dive right in at the Web site of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M, which for over 2 decades has excavated shipwrecks spanning the Bronze Age to the U.S. Civil War. Launched last year, the institute's virtual museum features more than 1000 photos chronicling excavations and surveys, from the first look at a sand-covered hull through the restoration of corroded copper jugs. (Above, an archaeologist checks out a pitcher wedged between two amphoras from a Byzantine ship that sank off southwestern Turkey around 1200 years ago.) The artifacts hauled from the sea—including a 14th century B.C. scarab of Queen Nefertiti, arsenic sulfide used in Byzantine medicine, and 17th century chamber pots from a Jamaican port—make for eerie windows into past lives. nautarch.tamu.edu/ina/vm.htm

HOT PICKS

Picturing inspiration. Filling out its Web patent database, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has just begun posting images (as TIFF files) for all U.S. patents since 1976. Until now you could see only text and abstracts. www.uspto.gov

Polar meltdown. Parts of the Antarctic Peninsula have been warming since the 1940s, but two ice shelves disintegrated surprisingly fast in the past year, losing an area nearly the size of Rhode Island. See radar satellite images chronicling the breakup at www-nsidc.colorado.edu/NSIDC

SITE VISIT

Calling All Chemists

www.chemweb.com

Several commercial Web sites call themselves "clubs" for scientists, hoping to become the first stop on a Web trekker's itinerary. So it is with ChemWeb, a subsidiary of Elsevier Science, which also owns the BioMedNet site for biologists. ChemWeb's free membership gives you access to *The Alchemist*, the site's very own Webzine, with weekly news about chemistry research and the chemical community, an events calendar, and a jobs database.

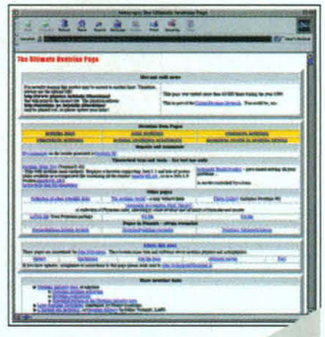
According to Jenny Drey, the site's press officer, "ChemWeb seeks to provide everything a chemist might need on the Web from day to day, including journal information and a shopping mall for books, lab supplies, and software." So far, the one-and-a-half-year-old site has signed up about 80,000 members.

The 120-title journals list leans toward the Elsevier collection, but Drey says the site is "publisher impartial" for those journals that want to participate. Searches are free, but full-text access requires a subscription or pay-per-view. The site also has a huge and well-organized directory of chemistry Web sites, called ChemDex. Another free feature, the ChemInform system, is a sort of MEDLINE for organic chemistry, with abstracts from over 200 journals dating back to 1980. Other features include a library of chemical structures, patents databases, and a virtual auditorium that offers online conferences and archived lectures. "We have correspondents at conferences who report in, and then ChemWeb members can jump into the discussion," says Drey.

SITE VISIT

On the Trail of Neutrinos

Neutrinos may be the most elusive particles ever. First predicted in 1931, then finally detected in 1956, the subatomic beasts have only recently divulged some of their properties, such as the fact that they have mass. To help track the latest findings, Juha Peltoniemi, a physics docent at the University of Helsinki, created The Ultimate Neutrino Page. Since 1996, the Web site has offered a handy resource for data on neutrinos and other particles, as well as links to neutrino experiments around the world.



www.physics.helsinki.fi/neutrino

Peltoniemi says the most popular section is a table of experimental results on how many neutrinos the sun emits. For decades, physicists have puzzled over the enormous discrepancy between experiments and theory in this area, wondering if, for example, neutrinos oscillate among different incarnations that sometimes elude detection. "People find it very useful to see an up-to-date comparison of all the results with the theoretical predictions," Peltoniemi explains.

The Ultimate Neutrino page also has educational applets. One lets you plug in different mass values for the three neutrino "flavors" and see if the results make sense for, say, dark matter or solar physics. And the Automatic Model Builder lets you pick a particle physics model (supersymmetry, for example), make assumptions (such as that neutrinos have mass), and see whether neutrinos could be the missing dark matter in the universe.

Science ONLINE

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